

Animal Services Advisory Board (ASAB) Free Roaming Cat (FRC) Task Force

Background:

Free-roaming cats are the most significant source of cat overpopulation in Orange County, NC. These may be feral or stray cats or they may be outside cats loosely affiliated with a single domicile or affiliated with a number of homes in a particular area. If not spayed and neutered, these cats can not only multiply quickly but can also exhibit disruptive behavior associated with mating and protection of territory such as yowling, fighting, and spraying. They are also associated with the destruction of small birds and small mammals. Some of these cats are owned and some are not. But when they breed, the number of unwanted cats increases exponentially. In addition to nuisance behavior, there are other issues including the lack of immunizations and spread of infection/disease among cat populations. These issues and the lack of guaranteed food, shelter and protection from predation make life especially hard for these cats. Unvaccinated free roaming cats can also pose a significant public health risk via the transmission of disease such as rabies and toxoplasmosis.

Orange County Animal Services (OCAS) and the ASAB are partnering to look for ways to address the issue of FRC overpopulation. Importantly, the overarching goal is to control cat overpopulation in Orange County, which supports and promotes the ASAB strategic plan for managing pet overpopulation. Integral to this plan are the objectives of reducing animal intakes and euthanasia and controlling the medium and long-term costs of animal services in Orange County. By controlling overpopulation and vaccinating FRCs, there will be the added benefit of increasing the health of FRCs, protection of public health, and less destruction of wildlife.

Charge: (define purpose, primary goals, and objectives)

Purpose: To cooperate with OCAS staff to examine the issue of feline overpopulation as a key component of the county's strategic plan for managing pet overpopulation and identify one or more initiatives to control free roaming cat overpopulation in a humane and sustainable manner.

Primary goals: TBD by task force and approved by ASAB

Objectives: The FRC Task Force will make recommendations to the ASAB on the issue of free roaming cat overpopulation and the associated protection of public health in Orange County, NC.

Timeline: TBD by task force and approved by ASAB

